

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SAM-01 OMB-01 SY-05 OPR-02

PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01

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P R 271803Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8995

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 7373

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS: REACTION TO OTELO'S IMPRISONMENT

REF: LISBON 7320 (DTG 261830Z OCT 76)

SUMMARY: OTELO SUPPORTERS WILL DEMONSTRATE IN CENTRAL LISBON ON THE EVENING OF OCT 27. THE ULTRA LEFT HAS WARNED ITS ADHERENTS AGAINST EXCESSES AND THE GOVERNMENT IS READY AND WILLING TO DEAL WITH THE DEMONSTRATION, BUT, GIVEN THE WIDE-SPREAD SYMPATHY FOR OTELO, AN INCIDENT CANNOT BE DISCOUNTED. END SUMMARY.

1. REACTION TO OTELO'S IMPRISONMENT: THE LAWYER FOR MAJ OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO ANNOUNCED OCT 26 THAT HE HAD APPEALED OTELO'S SENTENCE TO THE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF.

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THE LAWYER ALSO REQUESTED THAT OTELO'S OFFENSE BE COVERED

UNDER AN AMNESTY FOR MINOR POLITICAL OFFENSE PROCLAIMED
LAST WEEK. OTHER REACTIONS TO OTELO'S IMPRISONMENT (REFTEL)
FOLLOW:

-- DEMONSTRATION: THE POPULAR UNITY GROUP (GDUP) LEADERSHIP
WARNED OTELO'S FAR LEFT SUPPORTERS TO AVOID EXCESSES AND
PROVOCATIONS FROM THE RIGHT IN THE GDUP PROTEST MARCH THROUGH
LISBON TO THE ARMY STAFF BUILDING ON THE EVENING OF OCT 27.

-- BRITISH LABOR PROTEST: TWENTY MEMBERS OF THE
BRITISH PARLIAMENT FROM THE LABOR PARTY'S TRIBUNE GROUP
REPORTEDLY SENT A CABLE TO MARIO SOARES DEMANDING THE
IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF OTELO.

2. LOURENCO COMMENTS ON MEETING OF EX-MILICIANOS: LISBON
MILITARY REGION COMMANDER VASCO LOURENCO, DURING OCT 26
VISIT TO THE MAFRA INFANTRY TRAINING CENTER, TOLD THE PRESS:

-- HE WAS NOT WORRIED ABOUT THE MEETING OF EX-MILICIANOS
(REFTEL) SINCE THE ARMED FORCES HAD ALREADY DEMONSTRATED
THEIR FIRM ATTITUDE. SOME PARTICIPANTS WENT TO THE MALVEIRA
MEETING IN ORDER TO WARN THEIR COLLEAGUES THEY WERE
BEING USED. AN INQUIRY WILL DEMONSTRATE THAT SOME
MILITARY SOUGHT TO USE PROFESSIONAL GRIEVANCES TO MAKE
USE OF OTHER MILITARY MEN AGAINST THE DEMOCRATIC ORDER.

-- OTELO'S IMPRISONMENT DEMONSTRATES THAT MILITARY MEN
WILL HENCEFORTH BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR FULFILLING THE
LAWS AND REGULATIONS. THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES WILL NOT
HESITATE IN SHOWING EQUAL FIRMNESS AGAINST MILITARY
OFFENDERS OF WHATEVER FACTION.

3. GOVERNMENT GETS TOUGH WITH TRUCKDRIVERS: THE COUNCIL
OF MINISTERS OCT 26 STATED THAT SEVERAL HUNDRED TRUCKDRIVERS
WHO HAVE BLOCKADED THE SECIL CEMENT FIRM IN SETUBAL
TO PROTEST THE DIRECT SALE OF CEMENT TO CONSUMERS, WILL BE
FORCIBLY REMOVED IF THEY DON'T LIFT THE BLOCKADE BY OCT 28.

4. COMMENT: THE FAR LEFT'S CAUTIOUS APPROACH TO ITS PROTEST
DEMONSTRATION REFLECTS ITS RECOGNITION THAT THE GOVERNMENT
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HAS THE NECESSARY FORCE TO RESIST DISRUPTIVE ACTIONS, THE WILL
TO USE IT, AND SOME EAGER RIOT POLICE. NEVERTHELESS,
THE ELECTION RESULTS SHOW THAT OTELO IS A FIGURE WHO ENJOYS
WIDESPREAD SYMPATHY AND POPULARITY AND AN INCIDENT CANNOT BE
DISCOUNTED.
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